A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Thursday, September 22. 1709.

I Did as good promise you one *Review*, tho' it were a Digression, upon the Difference between the real and imaginary Greatness of Princes, and that vain Thing in our modern Phrase call'd Glory, and I must pay the Debt.

Here's a Monarch raises Armies, invades his Neighbours, oppresses Kingdoms, destroys Governments, and becomes terrible to Mankind; *and this is call'd Glory.* He's a great Man, gets the Title of *Immortal*, Invincible, the *Conqueror*, the Thunderer, the Great, and the like.—Just thus is King *Lucifer* become terrible.—The Devil is as Immortal, as Invincible, as Terrible as any of them all, and merits as much as any of them, in great Names, triumphant Titles, and accumulated Victories.—Will ye call mighty Oppressions, inexpressible Devastations, and invincible Injuries by the Nick-Names of Merit? Are these Glory? Then all the Tyrants and Destroyers of the World, Enemies of Mankind, and Insulters of Heaven, are Men of Glory; Hell is the Fountain of Praise, and *Satan* ought to be call'd *Lucifer Le Grand.*

Crime

Crime makes no Man Great, unleſs you will ſay, 'tis Great to be a great Rogue, 'tis Glorious to be a Robber, a Spoiler, a Bouteſeu, a Deſtroyer, and an Enemy of Mankind—— Thus the Devil is call'd THE GREAT, the Powerful, and might perhaps merit Laurels and Triumph; He *and* Louis le Grand *much upon the ſame Foot*, for illuſtrious Miſchiefs, glorious Diſtractions and Diſorders committed againſt the Peace of Mankind, Temporal and Eternal, adorn them both.

How wretchedly are the Men of theſe Days miſtaken, when they ſpeak of Greatneſs and Human Glory in this World—— As if to be terrible to their Fellow-Creatures, inſolent to their Maker, and brutal in their Exceſſes, were to be Great. True Grandeur conſiſts in Vertue, in the Purſuit of Truth, in erecting Juſtice, trampling down Oppreſſions, vigorouſly ſtruggling with encroaching Crime, dethroning Tyrants, protecting the Liberty of Nations, and reſtoring raviſh'd Right to injur'd People. This is Glory, and where a Monarch makes this his Buſineſs, *he is truly Great*; all the reſt is Flattery and Folly, ridiculouſly abſurd, below Men of Honour to accept, or free Nations to give.

Is it Grandeur and Glory to break Leagues, oppreſs Kingdoms, diſpoſſeſs Princes of their Rights, and Nations of their Liberties? Is it the Glory of a Prince to ſubject his own People to his abſolute Pleaſure, and make Free-born Subjects, Slaves? Is it his Honour to ruin his Country, to ſupport his Triumphs, to ſtarve his peaceable Subjects to feed and ſubſiſt his Armies, and to ſtrip his Native Subjects, who, in one Reſpect, are his Family and his Children, to cloath Mercenaries?

Peace is the Glory of a Crown, and under the Shade of which conſtantly flouriſhes Truth, Liberty, and Plenty; he that fights for Peace, makes War with Honour; if he conquers, he merits Triumph; if he falls, he dies with Satisfaction; and if he is conquer'd, he falls with more Glory than his Conqueror can triumph with. The Principle of every Action in the World denominates the Action—If it is founded on Juſtice, aim'd at Peace, and purſu'd with Truth, it is then juſt, honourable, and truly glorious; but to talk of Glory, when the Laurels are handed by a bleeding Nation, Honour founded on Injury, and War made for meer Conqueſt; this is all Blood, Rapine, and cruel robbing Mankind; ſuch Monarchs are Thieves to their Fellow-Creatures, and vile Uſurpers of that Dominion, GOD in the original Deſign of Government never beſtow'd on them.

And where does this voracious Humour of Mankind generally end? Mighty Princes gratifying their own Luſts, oppreſſing their own Subjects, invading Neighbours, cruſhing the weaker Princes round them, adding Kingdom to Kingdom, and Conqueſt to Conqueſt, grow Emperors, load themſelves with magnificent Titles, and gorgeous Triumphs; and where does it end, where has it always ended in the general Courſe of Divine Providence in the World? —— Behold the common Fate of ſuch Men, they grow intolerable and unſufferable to the World, Mankind abhors them—— The Nations, weary'd with their Inſults, form ſtrong Confederacies to defend themſelves againſt their encroaching growing Power; or their own People, made deſperate by their Oppreſſions,

take

take Arms in Defence of the common Right, and of their natural Liberties, like a Horſe, that, preſs'd by his unreaſonable Rider beyond his Strength, turns *reſtive*, and being gall'd with the Spur, kicks and toſſes off the cruel Load, under which he can no longer live.

Search all the over-grown Monarchies of the World, from *Sardanapalus* to *Lewis* XIV. where Princes have run theſe Extremes of Tyranny over their own People, or Encroachment on their Neighbours; and Hiſtory will inform you, that one of theſe two has always been their Fate; the *Perſian*, the *Grecian*, the *Roman* Empires have ſunk by theſe Means, and the *French* is falling by the ſame Method.

How vain then are all the Attempts of ambitious Men to aggrandize themſelves by Conqueſts? While Reaſon has a Place in the Minds of Men, it will firſt or laſt put Weapons in the Hands of injur'd Nations, to do themſelves Right— Let any Man look back upon the long Reign of *Lewis* XIV. with but this one Obſervation—And let them ſtate the Account of all his Glory, and ſee what he has to put into the Ballance.

Let them place to his *Credit* all the Conqueſts of 50 Years, a long Reign of Toil and Labour; the Kingdoms he has won, the People he has ſubjected, the Towns he has taken, and the many Battles he has fought with Glory and Victory. It is certain, that theſe are great Articles, ſuch as have loaded him with accumulated Glories, for which he has gain'd the Title of Great, Invincible, Immortal, and the like. In theſe Triumphs he began to grow old—and no doubt promis'd himſelf, like the Sun, to ſet in Brightneſs, to ſhine to the laſt Minute——and, *when ſet*, to gild the Edge of the Horizon with the beauteous Colours of a Summers Evening.

But now take his Debtor Side, and ſee how all this comes Even again, and place it to his *Debit*—His eager graſping at new Kingdoms, in Hope of univerſal Empire, and failing in the vain Attempt—to the exhauſting his infinite Treaſures amaſs'd from his oppreſſed People; then add the Confederacy of all the Nations round him, alarm'd at his vaſt Deſigns, and engag'd in Intereſt to reduce his Power, in order to protect themſelves from his Invaſions—Enrag'd to be thus chequ'd in his Career, he fights the whole World, raging like a wild Bull in a Toil—but faints in the fruitleſs Attempt; he that was too ſtrong for all the World, ſeparated and apart, finds himſelf overmatch'd when they unite in attacking him—And being beaten in five dreadful Battles, two of which were enough to have overwhelm'd the *Roman* Empire—He now offers to buy his Peace with ſurrendring his Conqueſts, diſgorging his evil-gotten Goods, abandoning his unjuſt Confederacies, pulling down his impregnable Barriers, and, in ſhort, is content to end, *juſt where he began*.

Has he not danc'd now theſe 50 Years in a Circle? —— And if he dies the ſame King of meer abſtracted *France*, that at 8 Years old he began to be, 'tis the favourable Circumſtance of *Europe*'s divided Intereſt that he owes it to, not his own Power or Ability to defend himſelf; were he fighting againſt a ſingle Monarch, and reduc'd thus low, he muſt have fallen without Recovery; but as we are confederated Powers, and have reſpective Intereſts, we fight for Peace, and not for Conqueſts;